



BBC Good Food Middle East: How did you first get into the world of coffee?

Rosco Franklin: Before I got into coffee I was in fashion design. I was working for a menswear company in Auckland, New Zealand making tailored business shirts. This became far too repetitive for me, so I decided to take a full career change.

I really wanted to get into hospitality, but didn't have any training or experience in it. So I got myself a job in a cafe, as a dish washer! I did that for about a week, before I moved onto another cafe where I learnt how to use a coffee machine for the first time. I thought it was fantastic, it was a new skill. From there I worked in a number of different hospitality venues in New Zealand, and I have always enjoyed being behind the machine, learning the art of coffee.

I have learnt, not through schooling, but through the industry itself. I have won many awards, and have consulted other baristas and coffee-roasters globally; however I find that I am still constantly learning.

I have been in the coffee industry for 15 years now, and I still wake up happy every day, no matter how tired I am, knowing that I am going to meet new people, share my passion for coffee and learn something new.

BBC GF ME: Do you think it is important that consumers are knowledgeable about coffee?

RF: It is so important that the consumer becomes more aware about coffee; a knowledgeable consumer will always help to raise the game.

The coffee industry is the second largest sold commodity in the world; it is so much a part of people's lives. There is more awareness of coffee and its abilities and its characteristics, and consumers are becoming more knowledgeable, however there is an element of acceptance in the UAE.

People often come from countries where they have the opportunity to experience wonderful coffee on a regular basis, but they

A cup above

Aromatic, frothy, strong, yet smooth, a great cup of coffee is an invigorating respite from our busy lives. *BBC Good Food Middle East* talks to roast-master Rosco Franklin about how to get the most from each cup

I'm part of a distinctive premium blend?

I am stored in the best conditions

I am coffee perfection

I'm locally roasted by hand in Dubai

Hello Mum

I am a 100% Grade 1 Arabica bean!

“If we want to make great quality coffee, we have to roast it fresh for the market in the UAE. By doing it locally, you can guarantee fresh produce”

come here and soon become acceptant of the coffee. There is great coffee available here, and consumers should keep striving to get their baristas to make a better cup.

BBC GF ME: What are some of the most important things you would like consumers to know about coffee?

RF: People need to understand that coffee is a perishable product. The green coffee bean, once dried out, will last about three years. However, once the beans have been roasted, it will not have the same lasting effect.

Many people that see coffee on the supermarket shelf will think that the coffee will last forever, but it won't. To enjoy the best flavours and characteristics of the coffee, the roasted coffee beans have a shelf-life of six weeks. Even when sealed in a bag or a tin, if the roasted coffee beans have been standing for over six weeks, the taste starts to become more bland and lighter in taste, and the characteristics aren't as strong. When you have fresh coffee you will have the nice scent coming through, but after a period of time it won't be as flavoursome and aromatic.

BBC GF ME: How can shoppers make sure they are buying a fresh bag of roasted coffee beans?

RF: All bags of coffee will have a production and expiry date. Look at the production date, and if it has been sitting around for over a month-and-a-half you won't be getting the best out of that coffee. Talking about the companies

at supermarkets, they are often fantastic companies. If you were to experience the same coffee closer to where it was roasted, it would be delicious, however the further away you get from where it is being produced, the more it deteriorates.

BBC GF ME: Is this the reason Coffee Planet decided to open up its own coffee roastery?

RF: Yes, we decided that if we want to make great quality coffee, we have to roast it fresh for the market in the UAE. By doing it locally, you can guarantee fresh produce. We can produce exactly what we need on a weekly basis, and make the best every time.

In the UAE, we wanted each hotel that we supply to have a different, bespoke blend of coffee. We have the freedom to get the standards right by being able to roast our own coffee and to create different blends.

BBC GF ME: Once the shopper has purchased the freshly roasted coffee beans, how should the coffee be stored?

RF: Storage is very important. I don't know where the myth that coffee should be stored in fridges and freezers came from, but this is definitely not suitable as humidity creates moisture, and will deteriorate what is supposed to be a dry product.

Once the bag of coffee is open, what you don't use for that day should be put it into an air-tight container and stored in a dry, cool place. You should never leave the coffee in a hopper or in the grinder overnight.



Originally from New Zealand, the award-winning barista and coffee-roaster Rosco Franklin has enjoyed 15 years in the coffee industry. Currently the roaster-master at Coffee Planet Dubai, Rosco Franklin is BBC Good Food Middle East's monthly voice on coffee.

BBC GF ME: How long does the coffee last once the bag has been opened?

RF: Once opened and stored, the coffee will have a life-span of 10 to 14 days. The coffee matures like wine, so from day four to seven the coffee is at its peak and from day seven to 14 it starts to deteriorate very slowly. So you start to lose some flavours as the oxygen starts to attack.

BBC GF ME: You are talking about the full, un-ground beans here. How long will the ground beans last?

RF: Once the coffee has been ground, oxidation kicks in immediately and you have a shelf-life of just five to seven minutes. For home use, we always suggest that people buy a decent grinder. Then you can grind a little amount of coffee at a time, and as you are grinding it fresh you will get the best flavours coming through. A good barista should always be grinding the beans fresh. While you may go into a cafe and smell all those nice aromas, it is better if those aromas end up in your cup. The only way to get those fragrances in your cup, rather than in the cafe, is to grind the beans fresh.

BBC GF ME: What should a consumer look for in a really good cup of coffee?

RF: A lot of flavours should be coming through, and it should be strong enough, but not harsh. You shouldn't need a double shot of espresso to get the strength, as a single shot should give you that bold characteristic. All the aromas from the cup of coffee should be experienced, then on first sip it should be very strong and then the coffee should smooth out.

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